

Inspection of Alexandra House

20 Crownhill Fort Road, Plymouth, Devon PL6 5BX

Inspection date: 20 March 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happily and quickly settle into playing. They benefit from warm and nurturing relationships with staff, who know them very well. Staff are responsive to children's individual needs and recognise when children might need additional help. They work with other professionals to put in place extra support and skilfully adapt activities to help children to achieve their next steps.

Staff provide an exciting and ambitious curriculum that builds on children's knowledge and skills over time. They use songs particularly well to develop children's language skills and make learning fun. Children respond well to staff and are keen to join in new and familiar learning experiences. Children demonstrate a love of books. They focus well as they look at books independently, carefully turning the pages and studying the pictures with interest. Staff ensure children access a range of different books, including those linked to other ways of life, to promote cultural diversity.

Staff support children well to do more things for themselves as they get older. Children demonstrate good levels of independence, including washing their hands, pouring their own drinks from jugs and putting on their coats. Staff emphasise the importance of children learning to keep themselves safe. For instance, they support children to learn to cross the road safely as part of their regular visits to the local shops and library.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Leaders are passionate about children achieving the best possible outcomes. They regularly reflect on the service they provide and introduce new initiatives where appropriate, such as 'golden rules' for children's learning and behaviour. Staff take part in frequent training to update their knowledge. For instance, they participate in courses to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff morale is high and the nursery is a happy place for children, their families and staff.
- Leaders have recently made extensive, positive changes to the curriculum to develop its rich and varied nature. They have created a strong vision and ethos and shared this well with staff. However, there are some parts of the curriculum which are not yet fully embedded. For instance, while staff regularly promote mathematical skills with children, they have differing expectations of what children can achieve, particularly in developing children's understanding of number. At times, staff can be too challenging in their expectations of children and, at other times, not challenging enough.
- Staff develop children's communication skills well. They frequently introduce new vocabulary and engage children in conversations as they play. They consider

when children have speech and language difficulties and encourage them to use visual methods to make their needs known. For instance, children confidently choose simple picture cards to give to staff to ask for help.

- Children make particularly good progress in their physical development. Staff support children to develop both their small- and large-muscle skills as they play. For instance, children demonstrate very good coordination and balancing skills as they concentrate to walk along simple obstacle courses in the outdoor area.
- On the whole, staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and conduct. They help children to recognise their emotions and usually intervene quickly when children struggle with regulating their behaviour. However, on occasion, staff do not apply the behaviour expectations consistently and children become confused as to what behaviour is acceptable and what is not.
- Children develop a very good understanding of being part of the local community. Staff help children to learn to take care of the world around them through practical activities, including litter picking in the area around the nursery. Children also benefit from frequent visits to the local care home, where they take part in fun activities with the elderly residents, such as playing 'hook-a-duck'. Staff report on the positive impact of these visits in supporting children to become more confident in a range of different social situations.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff communicate effectively with parents and provide regular updates on children's progress. Staff ensure there is a two-way flow of information, which supports staff to build on children's interests and experiences outside of the nursery. For instance, staff provide additional emotional support and activities for the children from Armed Forces families if their parents are deployed abroad.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- refine the curriculum for mathematics to ensure staff provide suitable challenge for children
- ensure staff provide consistent messages in supporting children to regulate their behaviour to help them make good choices in their conduct.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY281026
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10389968
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	86
Name of registered person	Alexandra House (Royal United Service Short Stay Residence for Service Children)
Registered person unique reference number	RP523923
Telephone number	01752 781 888
Date of previous inspection	12 April 2023

Information about this early years setting

Alexandra House registered in 2004 and is located in Plymouth, Devon. The nursery is open from 8am to 5pm, from Monday to Friday, for 48 weeks a year. There are 16 members of staff, 12 of whom hold relevant qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery offers government funded childcare places.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Leanne Edge

Inspection activities

- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The childcare manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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